

me and many of my constituents a lifelong appreciation for jazz and its influences and it truly is a national treasure.

Had I been present on rollcall No. 972 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1517, To allow certain U.S. Customs and Border Protection employees who serve under an overseas limited appointment for at least 2 years, and whose service is rated fully successful or higher throughout that time, to be converted to a permanent appointment in the competitive service, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present on rollcall No. 973 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 3978, First Responders Anti-Terrorism, Training Resources Act, I would have voted "aye."

#### GALLAGHER-HANSEN VFW POST'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY

#### HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the Gallagher-Hansen Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 295, Department of Minnesota, on the occasion of the Post's 90th Anniversary. Since its original charter in 1919, the Gallagher-Hansen VFW Post has been dedicated to serving veterans and the entire community of South Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Founded as the Patrick Gallagher Post in honor of a local World War I veteran, the post was renamed to honor Lt. Harry C. Hansen, a post member, who lost his life during the Battle of Okinawa in World War II.

All veterans have served and sacrificed on behalf of our great Nation, but many veterans continue their noble service after their tours of duty have been completed. The members of the Gallagher-Hansen VFW Post are among these selfless servants.

Throughout its proud history, the Gallagher-Hansen Post and Auxiliary have earned distinction as exceptional Veterans Service Organizations. Beyond its strong support for veterans, the post is also a community cornerstone. From providing donations to the Dakota County Veterans Emergency Assistance Fund and the South St. Paul Police K-9 unit, to sponsoring an annual Children's Safety Camp and funding a new scoreboard at Wakota Arena, Gallagher-Hansen provides steadfast support to residents in the area.

Gallagher-Hansen's reputation for outstanding public service extends deep into its ranks. Post 295 has been the home VFW post to many state and national leaders, including former Minnesota Governors Karl Rolvaag, Harold Stassen and Orville Freeman. Other members include: past National Ladies VFW Auxiliary President Lola Reid, whose late husband Dr. James Reid served as past Surgeon General of the VFW; past National VFW Chaplain Father Harold E. Whittel; Robert Hansen, past Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and the brother of Lt. Harry C. Hansen; and the late U.S. Navy Admiral John S. McCain, father of U.S. Senator John McCain of Arizona.

Madam Speaker, please join me in rising to honor the 90th Anniversary of the Gallagher-Hansen VFW Post No. 295, and the veterans

who have given so much in support of their fellow veterans, families and our community.

#### RECOGNIZING THE HEROIC GENEROSITY OF CLARA WARD OF ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA

#### HON. KATHLEEN A. DAHLKEMPER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary woman in Erie, Pennsylvania, who has dedicated her life to helping the children of her community. Clara Ward, the founder of the Youth Development and Family Center in Erie, was the star of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," this week, where her indomitable spirit and dedication to the well-being of children in need was rewarded with an amazing renovation to her more than eighty year old home.

Clara Ward, with her son Bennie and daughter Cynthia, has continually put aside her own needs to take care of the children in her community. Too often, the children in Clara's neighborhood lack the care and resources they need to succeed, to be healthy and safe. These children rely on the generosity of their "Aunt Clara" to have a safe haven after school, where they can play off the streets and out of harm's way.

Many of the children who come to the Youth Development and Family Center would go to bed hungry without the generosity of Clara, Bennie and Cynthia, who feed and welcome children into their home almost every day. Not only does Clara provide a safe space, but she offers these children clothes, blankets and toys that they might not otherwise have. This time every year, Clara gives toys to 300 children for the holidays.

Clara's boundless generosity is all the more remarkable given her own condition. Clara suffers from myasthenia gravis, a degenerative muscular disease that requires her to use a wheelchair. In her old home, Clara's mobility was severely limited and she struggled to move through rooms and hallways that had no space for her wheelchair. Now, thanks to the renovation, Clara can move with ease through a home designed with her needs in mind.

Clara Ward's selflessness has inspired the entire community of Erie. It was her good work that motivated local builder John Maleno and his family to nominate Clara for "Extreme Makeover," which drew 3,000 volunteers and donations from 200 companies. Clara's story has inspired our city and helped us show the world that Erie, Pennsylvania, is a place where neighbors look out for each other and the spirit of generosity runs deep.

Madam Speaker, it is my proud duty to enter the name of Clara Ward in the record of the United States House of Representatives as a hero of Erie, Pennsylvania.

#### TIME IS RUNNING OUT IN SUDAN

#### HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker earlier today a news conference was held with Congressmen

DONALD PAYNE, CHRIS SMITH and myself along with representatives from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), to draw attention to the desperate situation in Sudan. We heard compelling firsthand accounts of what transpired in Khartoum last week. Arrests, detention, tear gas and beatings of peaceful Sudanese protesters including several high-ranking Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) officials. These protesters had gathered in the streets to press Sudan's President Bashir and his National Congress Party (NCP) to demand passage of important laws by the National Assembly.

Khartoum's actions are inexcusable, but why should we be surprised, given the head of state is an accused war criminal. We also know from widely reported information that the National Congress Party (NCP) is obstructing the establishment of conditions for free and fair elections. The world also still awaits reform of the national security law.

Against this backdrop of violence and intimidation by Khartoum, the NCP and the SPLM entered into intense negotiations over the weekend. While reports indicate that a tentative compromise has been reached, the outcome is still far from assured. And if the coming weeks don't yield the necessary results, the long-suffering people of Sudan will watch any real prospect of lasting peace and justice slip away. Will the U.S. stand by and allow this to happen?

For years the U.S. has been a leader on the world stage in advocating for the marginalized people of Sudan. This is an issue, unlike many in Washington, which has enjoyed broad, bipartisan support. In January 2005, after two and half years of negotiations, the North and the South signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) bringing about an end to the 21-year-old civil war during which nearly two million people died, most of whom were civilians. I was at the signing of the CPA in Kenya along with Congressman PAYNE. Hopes were high for a new Sudan.

Sadly those hopes are quickly dimming as President Bashir becomes further entrenched and principled U.S. leadership on Sudan wanes. On the eve of the five-year anniversary of the signing, the CPA hangs in the balance as does Sudan's future.

President Obama's special envoy to Sudan, General Scott Gration, was appointed in March of this year. Many in Congress, myself included, had pressed for a special envoy in the hope of elevating the issue of Sudan particularly at this critical juncture in the implementation of the CPA and with genocide in Darfur still ongoing.

While there have been times in the months following that I have been concerned by the direction that this administration appeared to be taking in Sudan, I refrained from any public criticism, not wanting to do anything that could jeopardize peace or progress on these critical issues. But I can be silent no longer.

The time has come for Secretary Clinton and President Obama to personally and actively engage on Sudan.

During the campaign, then candidate Obama said, "Washington must respond to the ongoing genocide and the ongoing failure to implement the CPA with consistency and strong consequences." He went on to say, "The Bush administration should be holding Sudan accountable for failing to implement significant aspects of the 2005 Comprehensive